

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 2/19/2020 10:14:28 PM

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Comments: I'd like to add two concerns regarding the draft proposed action for the Trail Project.

First, I want to emphasize the need for action to make roads in the area compatible with watershed health and wildlife habitat. Roads which are susceptible to seasonal rutting and washouts contribute sediment to streams at high rates, impacting both water quality and fish habitat. High road density and traffic can also decrease surrounding habitat usage for many species. Ongoing road maintenance is expensive, and the miles of roads left open to use should be commensurate with funds available for future annual road inspection, recreation enforcement, and maintenance. While there is high interest in using roads for recreation, roads for that purpose need to be carefully sited to avoid both wildlife conflict and watershed damage.

My second concern is about the sources of funding for the non-commercial restoration and recreation activities listed in the proposed action. It would be helpful to see which of these activities will be conducted through assured agency or partner funding, which ones are tied to specific funds from the commercial projects, and which will need future grant funding to complete.

If too many of these projects are contingent on nonexistent funding, it is possible that while all the commercial activities move forward, a substantial portion of the non-commercial activities might not actually happen. There is an obvious impact to wildfire resiliency, recreation and habitat values in the area if these non-commercial projects are not completed. But beyond that, it might also create public distrust in future collaborative projects, with the process appearing as a cover-up to gain public buy-in for what turns out to be mainly commercial logging. Transparency upfront about the likelihood and time frame for completing each project will help.

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